

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS.

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF CT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Dear members of the Connecticut Human Services Committee:

Good afternoon, my name is Amalina Ortiz Perez. I am from Guatemala and I've lived in Hartford for 14 years. I am member of Hartford Deportation Defense and I'm in favor of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. This would be a great step in improving access to health care for our community.

We need health insurance. When you go to the hospital they always tell us that at a certain age we have to get mammograms, etc. They made me fill out an application for a program and from there you have to wait for them to call you when they want to see if you qualify and then wait more until they give you an appointment. If we had insurance, the situation would be different and they would see us faster. Sometimes you come to the appointment thinking that something is free, and a week later the bill arrives and you have to pay. This happened to me recently.

In 2010 I had to have surgery. The bill came to my house for \$7000. I had to go to the hospital to present a lot of documents to be able to access the financial aid. Since then I don't go to emergency rooms to avoid that kind of debt but during my pregnancy I had to go because it was important for my health and my baby's health. As much as I intended to avoid health debt, at that time I had no choice. The most important thing was that the baby was well.

Please support S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. We all need it.

Thank you,
Amalina Ortiz Perez